

Norman kings, when the first Williams and Henries trained and organised an effective bureaucracy. It had been of undoubted service to the country for long generations, and in the fourteenth century the leaders of the clergy were still on a level with laymen as administrators and politicians, for they had been selected as Bishops on account of the qualities they displayed in these secular capacities. But, although the system was valuable as a means of rewarding services to the State, it was a more questionable boon to the Church. The Bishops could not and did not give that attention to the state of their dioceses, and *the* conduct and teaching of their priests, which was at this time so loudly called for. Those who were interested in the efficiency of the Church for the performance of her spiritual duties could not be blind to her shortcomings, and could not but be shocked at the very small extent to which these shortcomings troubled the Bishops. Wrapped up in their secular business, they were quite contented if all things proceeded on traditional and authorised lines. If the Pope approved indulgences, they were a legitimate piece of business. If rectories were empty, or illod with underpaid vicars, it had always been so. But to a man like Wycliffe, to whom the practice and teaching of religion wore questions of life and death, such an attitude on the part of the prelaty seemed treason. He ascribed their indifference to their wealth,, and to their secular employments. It was his object to spiritualise the clergy by severing their connection with offices of State. * Ceesarean clergy,⁷ as he called all those who held secular dominion, were and must always be worldly men. As years went on, and he found that the prelates clung closer to their secular posts and their worldly schemes for money and power, he came to regard prelaty as too closely connected with these evils ever to be dissociated from them. His other speculations were already driving him towards Presbyterianism, and he came finally to the conclusion that the higher orders of prelates, to which the * Casaarean clergy ' belonged, were both unnecessary and injurious to the Church. But even before he had arrived at his later Presbyterian position, he always regarded with particular horror a clergyman holding secular office. **It** was one of his earliest doctrines, but as ho